

FAD Emergency/Surveillance

Introduction

The incumbent serves as a Veterinary Medical Officer on a time-limited basis during emergency situations when permanent APHIS resources are engaged in surveillance activity or overwhelmed in a Foreign Animal Disease or emerging disease outbreak

Duties and Responsibilities:

Following are some of the major duties and responsibilities which may be assigned during these emergency situations. These functions are not all inclusive:

- Examines herds and/or individual animals for clinical signs of disease.
- Conducts postmortem examinations of animals under field conditions.
- Collects specimens for submission to laboratories.
- Collects epidemiological information about diseased or exposed animals.
- Humanely euthanizes diseased or exposed animals.
- Supervises disposal of animal carcasses.
- Supervises cleaning and disinfection procedures.
- Administers vaccines.
- Uses proper identification devices and techniques for inspected, exposed, diseased, or vaccinated animals.
- Follows correct biosecurity procedures while conducting inspections and examinations.
- Accurately completes official government documents and forms and keeps accurate records.
- Supervises the humane handling and movement of exposed and/or diseased animals.
- Inspects livestock markets, slaughter establishments, trucks, and other vehicles to ensure disease prevention, control, and eradication requirements are being met.

Factors:

1.) Knowledge Required by the Position:

Professional knowledge is required in veterinary medical concepts, principles, and practices applicable to the full range of disease control and eradication and health programs and activities for livestock, poultry, or other species of animals, birds, and their products and by-products.

Knowledge and skill necessary to conduct antemortem and postmortem examinations of individual animals and herds in order to diagnose diseases and conditions.

Knowledge and skills necessary to evaluate livestock markets, slaughter facilities, and transport vehicles to ensure that they are clean and properly disinfected and that handling procedures are acceptable in terms of disease prevention, control, and eradication requirements.

Knowledge of substances and/or methods used in humanely euthanizing diseased animals and techniques employed to properly dispose of their carcasses in a safe manner.

Knowledge of the proper vaccines to use for a variety of diseases and how to administer them.

Knowledge of the techniques used in supervising the humane handling and movement of exposed and/or diseased animals.

2.) Supervisory Controls:

The supervisor sets forth the incumbent's scope of activities and provides general instructions regarding agency policies and overall objectives, priorities, and deadlines.

The employee independently carries out assignments, dealing directly with livestock producers, slaughterhouse employees, and other affected parties. The supervisor is consulted when unusual situations or problems are encountered which do not fit established precedents.

Work is reviewed for technical soundness, conformity of efforts within the scope of the emergency program and adherence to regulatory guidance.

3.) Guidelines:

Guidelines include agency policies, directives, and regulations and established biosecurity procedures. The incumbent uses judgment in selecting, adapting, and applying guidelines successfully to pertinent situations.

4.) Complexity:

Assignments involve the diagnosis and treatment of disease as well as the gathering of epidemiological information, the collection of blood and tissue samples, and the evaluation of animal production facilities and transport vehicles for cleanliness and adherence to disease

prevention, control, and eradication requirements. In determining the best approach to use in carrying out assignments, the employee must evaluate various disease conditions and assess priorities at each stage of the assignment. The employee may be confronted with unique and previously un-encountered situations which are sensitive and controversial in nature.

5.) Scope and Effect:

The purpose of this position is to contribute to the control of disease through evaluation, inspection, diagnosis, and vaccination of animals, to supervise the safe handling and movement of diseased and/or exposed animals, and to ensure the safe disposal of diseased animals and their carcasses. Emergency outbreaks pose a threat to individual farmers, slaughterhouses, and livestock marketing, with possible national or international ramifications.

6.) Personal Contacts:

Contacts are with APHIS, VS, and state animal health employees, as well as private farmers, production facility managers and employees, and animal health industry representatives.

7.) Purpose of Contacts:

The purpose of the contacts is to collect and disseminate information about animal disease prevalence and to explain medical findings and conclusions, dealing with individuals who may be uncooperative or in situations where conflicting interests exist. Tact is required when persuading individuals to comply with disease prevention regulations and control requirements.

8.) Physical Demands:

Inspection and examination work requires regular and recurring prolonged standing, walking, stooping, bending, and climbing.

9.) Work Environment:

Work is performed under field conditions, with possible exposure to extreme heat and cold and diseases. Protective clothing and gear are required if working with animals infected with diseases which are communicable to humans.